

PORNFREE RADIO

019 My Wife Caught Me Looking at Porn, Now What?!?!

Welcome to Pornfree Radio. I'm Matt Dobschuetz. This is the podcast for people who want to live 100% porn free. Today's episode is called, My Wife Caught Me Looking at Porn, Now What? It's how to talk to your wife about your porn habit. Believe me this podcast is based on real life experience of myself working through this with my wife. Now, I titled it, my wife caught me looking at porn, now what, partly because I remember the first kind of time when my wife caught me actually looking at porn and the days that followed – just all the things that I had to go through then. But I also am aware of... there's other times in our marriage where I've had to confess that I've relapsed.

We have to be honest about our porn habit. We have to be honest about our relapses with our wife. I got an email recently from someone who's still struggling with the idea of talking to his wife about his porn addiction. I'm not saying that you have to do it right away, but ultimately, for the good of your marriage, for the good of your wife, and for the good of yourself, you need to start entering in to an honest dialog with your wife about your struggle.

And the reason for this is our first temptation is always to hide and try and make ourselves look better. But our goal here with our wives, is to really gain their trust, to really rebuild trust, to really dig in and have a healthier and more intimate, honest relationship. So withholding or minimizing or not telling them will not give us what we truly want.

Think about it. If you were going before a judge for crimes you committed and he offered you a full pardon, you would only be able to receive the full pardon if you fully confessed. Otherwise, you'd still be liable for the crimes that didn't come to light. So for example, if you were caught stealing and the judge offered a full pardon, if you didn't tell everything that you stole then he would only pardon what he knew. If there were other things that you had stolen, at some point, you might be liable for those things.

Talking to our wives and becoming more honest is really about getting everything out there so that she can really take it in, she can really have an understanding, and really forgive all the crimes and so that we can really feel that. And so you're doing yourself a disservice if you're withholding, if you're hiding, because deep

down in the inside you will still be slave to the lie that if she really knew me, if she really knew everything I did, she wouldn't love me. So there's always going to be a doubt in your mind. So it's really in your benefit to really give her a clear picture of what is going on with you. So ultimately, if you're really seeking forgiveness from your wife, you will share an accurate picture of your patterns and behaviors. In the first few days after discovery of porn or relapse that you tell her about, invite her to ask any question. Your job is to make it safe for her to ask anything she needs to ask. And I have some guidelines for you for how to respond and how to keep the conversation going. So here's some things to do in these initial conversations, as she's asking her questions.

First of all, don't lie. This is the biggest thing. Be open with your wife and never actively lie. Lying just compounds your problems when you're trying to rebuild trust. You need to be as accurate as possible in your sharing. Now, if your wife is anything like my wife, who's really smart and kind of puts things together, she might start building a timeline in her head. She might start, after you sort of tell her about some of the stuff you've been doing, she might start putting it together. She might go... you know when I went to my mom's house; did you look at porn all weekend? Or when you said you were working on that project on the computer late at night, were you actually working? So, think long and hard about how you want to respond to those things. You want to be as accurate as possible. And you want to not lie. So just plainly answer those questions. So don't lie.

And whatever you do, don't get defensive. Remember, you're going for a full pardon, so be open and answer questions as honestly and accurately as you can. And if you don't know an answer, or can't remember, then just say that. It's much easier to say, I don't remember that weekend, or I don't remember that one event. If you do remember, be accurate and honest about it. If you don't, say I don't know. That's a really good... I mean you just need to do that. So don't lie, don't get defensive.

Whatever you do, don't justify any acting out with porn. First of all porn should be off limits for you. It's out of boundary for you; you've already determined that for yourself. So there's no good reason to look at porn. Completely own your choices to look at porn. Never ever directly or indirectly infer that something in your life, especially your wife, caused you to look at porn. So don't talk about the stress at work, don't talk about your nonexistent sex life, your dog died, whatever. You'll never get free of this if you continue to be passive and blame your porn on some external thing in your life. You're the responsible one here. So don't justify, don't give your wife any indication that somehow you're not responsible. So don't lie, don't get defensive, don't justify.

And don't minimize. In an attempt to save face, we sometimes make it sound like we don't have that bad of a problem. You ever done this? You'll say something like I did just did a few Google image searches. Or I watched a sexy

clip on YouTube. We make it sound like we have a PG-13 problem when really we know it's hardcore XXX. Like we've really gone to dark places. We might be tempted to say we were on the computer for 5-10 minutes when we were on the computer for an hour, or hours. There's a part of you that doesn't want to come clean. There's a part of you that doesn't want to be fully known. That doesn't want to expose this part. You want to hide.

So make accurate statements like, I looked at 10 short videos. I was on the computer for 2 hours. I searched for a term that I knew would return explicit results. Be very honest about what you did. Now you don't have to go into every detail of every type of fetish or something that you were into, but you can plainly own that when you did a search for big boobs or something, you knew the results that would come back. You weren't just by accident ending up with a porn search. You actively typed something in the Google search box and were looking at the results. You just have to be super accurate. So don't lie, don't be defensive, don't justify, don't minimize.

And a final tip: be concrete and concise. Have you ever heard someone over explaining or rationalizing why they did something? You know there's this instinct in us that automatically distrusts them the more they talk. We might see them passive or weak. The more they tell their story, it sounds like just that, a story. And when they use passive language like, I happened to be on the computer and I did a Google search or I stumbled on a show last night on cable and watched it all the way through. They're couching their words and deflecting responsibility. Whenever someone's like that, you just start to distrust them. So if there's one final piece of advice I could say when talking to your wife, be concrete and concise.

Say things like, I did a Google search for porn. I watched a video of a girl undressing and I masturbated. Very factual. Very... just based on what happened. It's gonna be hard to do this, but the less words that you use and the clearer you can be, the more trust you will actually build up. And if they ask follow up questions, just respond concretely, respond concisely. The more talking you do, and the more prone you are to justify or maybe get defensive, or minimize and that just gets you into more trouble. The more concrete you can be the better.

What's great about it is when you get really good at being concrete if your wife starts asking questions that are out of bounds, like maybe she's feeling upset about the type of porn you were looking at or asking questions like do you like her better than me, do you like this or that, you can just say, this is what I did, this is what I was looking at, this is the amount of time I took, it was completely wrong, I totally own that. Some of those questions you can go, I can't answer that. I got looking at my porn and this is what I did. It's not about you. You can just really own that and you don't have to spend a lot of time defending or trying to answer questions that you can't answer.

Do you want the woman on the screen more than your wife? That's a question that might be fair for her to ask, but ultimately, the truth is no. I don't want that. And I'm confessing this because I want you to know what happened and I love you and I want to rebuild trust. This was wrong and I totally own that. So it's not a what if, what if I could have this fantasy girl or some sort of weird comparison. It's just... It is what it is. The clearer and the more concise you can be the better.

Now obviously when you are in these conversations your goal is to going to be to start to put a plan back together. How are you going to walk this out? Your wife is going to want to know what you're going do to protect yourself. So you need to start thinking about that. You need to start thinking about what are the things that are going to help me get to where I need to go. Being honest with your wife is a great start. That actually, guys who don't talk to their wives about this and don't have any ongoing dialog with their wives really are at a disadvantage. Because when you can have an open dialog about this with your wife and you can really get past some of this defensiveness and some of the pain and the hurt, your wife can be a great ally.

You can tell... I've gotten to the point now where I can tell my wife, you know I'm really feeling drawn to act out. Or I'm feeling drawn to a certain TV show. I can tell her before I go down the rabbit hole. And just being honest about that really frees me to be known and be loved at a deeper place. She sees all of who I am. She knows all of my weaknesses. And I'm not trying to hide my weakness.

So she's going to want to see you starting to put a plan in place: the more that you can be proactive in that, the better. It's great to basically say, I relapsed with porn and these are the three things I'm going to do to start to put some safety back into our marriage with this. I'm going to start meeting with an accountability person, or I'm going to join an online group. I'm going to work through this book. There's all sorts of things you can do in a plan that will start to demonstrate to your wife that you're serious about this. After you have these initial conversations that should be where you're going.

And she might ask what are you going to do about this? And that's where you really need to have... start to put together a plan. You are responsible for you so you really need to be the steward of your recovery. All too often, sometimes we like to deflect and say or justify our behavior, well, I'm no one asked me how I was doing so I just got into my porn again. Or my accountability partner is not that good. Or my software didn't work. But ultimately, you need to put a plan together for yourself.

That can be all sorts of things. You can work on how your time is spent. You can get a filter for your computer. You can start to analyze your triggers. What led you to this relapse? What led you to where you're at now? What boundaries do you need to put on, say, your work computer? Is there some mobile device management plans you need? Did you get in trouble with your iPad or your

iPhone? Do you need to put some child locks on those? Do you need to get rid of the browsers on those tools? Did you get in trouble with TV? Is there a TV password that needs to be set in your cable, or a show filtered so that you don't watch certain TV-MA rated shows? Do you need a consequence? Is just telling your wife; is that not enough of a consequence? I think I mentioned this in Episode 4. Is there a consequence you can set to just reinforce this habit that you want to go for, this porn free habit? Is there a need for ongoing support? Do you need to go to a group? Do you need to get on an online group? What do you need to walk this out?

Obviously your wife can be part of your support, she can be an ally, but she can't be your primary support. You're going to need other guys, or if you're a woman you're going to need other women to come around you so that you can work this out with your husband. You might need to go to an intensive. I mentioned this early on in my marriage, I went to an intensive, a 3 day counseling session. Just to really jump start my recovery. And that might be something that you need to look into. Ultimately, with our wives, what we're really trying to do is get to a place of deeper intimacy, deeper honesty. And we're going for that full pardon. We really want her to walk into every place, see what our struggle is, see an accurate picture of what we've been doing, and then really make a choice to forgive us. And she's going to forgive us based on our honesty and based on what we do to demonstrate our commitment to being porn free.

So thanks again for listening today. As always, thanks for all the comments, on [Twitter](#), on [Facebook](#), on [Google+](#), on [reddit](#), I love it. The show notes for this show will be at pornfreeradio.com/19.

If there's anything you're interested in talking about in the next few episodes, please let me know. If there's a question that's been on your mind, if there's been a pain point that you want to resolve, let me know. I'd love to kind of explore it. So if you have any questions, feel free to reach out to me. You can go to pornfree.com and go to the [contact Matt page](#) that will have all the ways to get a hold of me. So, all right. Hang in there and continue to live porn free. It's totally worth it.